

**Spotted Pardalote on Rottnest Island** — The birds of Rottnest Island have attracted a great deal of attention because of the close proximity of the island to Perth, the capital city of Western Australia. However, recent reviewers of its avifauna (Storr, *Emu* 64, 1964: 182-180; Saunders & de Rebeira, *J. Proc. Roy. Soc. W. Aust.* 66, 1983: 47-83) have cited no records of the Spotted Pardalote *Pardalotus punctatus*. On 20-27 May 1973 I saw a minimum of six pardalotes feeding and calling in canopies of Tuart *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* at the main settlement. Judging by the number and volume of calls, there were additional pardalotes. In south-western Australia, this species is known to undertake a winter dispersal inland and northward at the onset of cool weather in autumn. Inland range limits during winter are Cockleshell Gully, Mt Jackson, Widgiemooltha and Cape Le Grand. Its movements are somewhat random and different from year to year, and it occasionally irrupts in large numbers in the Perth area. Presumably the flock at Rottnest resulted from autumn dispersal.

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**Barn Owl on Rottnest Island** — There have been no published records of the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) on Rottnest Island, but a specimen was found freshly dead on the east side of Garden Lake around March/April 1986 by an island resident. This specimen was held in a freezer at the Environment Centre on the island and given to CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Rangelands Research for identification in June 1986.

On 8 July 1986 I saw a Barn Owl perched in a *Melaleuca* on the west side of Bickley Swamp (near Kingstown Barracks). I was able to get within four metres and watched it for two minutes before it flew 200 metres to settle in another *Melaleuca*. The bird appeared to have a lot of speckling on the wings and breast and was probably an immature bird.

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**Another sighting of Black Honeyeaters eating ash** — On the morning of 20 August 1985, at shearing quarters on Meeberrie Station near the Murchison Shire Office, north of Mullewa, I noticed a female Black Honeyeater coming into an ash pile and eating from it. I called other people's attention to this — and the ash pile was kept under observation for 1 hour between 7.30 and 8.30 a.m.

Initially, 3 females and one male were observed — then two males were seen together coming to within one metre of the ash pile, but not eating. Females came in continuously during the time we were there. Just before we left there were actually 6 females at the ash and one male in attendance close-by.

The ash pile, which was about 10 metres from the shearing quarters was obviously from the kitchen range and contained a lot of bones. The birds were watched swallowing, but only seemed to be eating the grey ash. There had been rain on the previous day

and a heavy dew overnight. It seemed strange that so many birds, which are usually fairly scarce and nomadic could all get together, and home in on this one pile of ash, which was in the open surrounded by lush grass. As last year ('Field and Study', W.A. *Naturalist* June 1985), I found they were remarkably unafraid of human presence in their need for ash.

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**Sacred Kingfisher snared by Dodder** — On 11 February 1987 at Gooseberry Hill, W.A. a dead Sacred Kingfisher *Halcyon sancta* was found entwined in the stems of dodder, *Cassytha racemosa* which was growing on *Hibbertia hypericoides*. The bird was a juvenile by plumage and had been dead for some weeks. Dodder stems had twisted around the right leg like fishing line and there were two strands encircling the left wing. It was hanging head down about 20 cm above the ground. There was a perch tree above the site, so probably the kingfisher had become caught while attempting to pounce on prey below the dodder.

— M.G. BROOKER, 27 Marion Way, Gooseberry Hill, W.A.